



Digital Proofer

Havana Now: A Photo...

Authored by J K McCrea

8.0" x 10.0" (20.32 x 25.40 cm)
Black & White on White paper
168 pages

ISBN-13: 9781482509243
ISBN-10: 1482509245

Please carefully review your Digital Proof download for formatting, grammar, and design issues that may need to be corrected.

We recommend that you review your book three times, with each time focusing on a different aspect.

- 1 Check the format, including headers, footers, page numbers, spacing, table of contents, and index.
- 2 Review any images or graphics and captions if applicable.
- 3 Read the book for grammatical errors and typos.

Once you are satisfied with your review, you can approve your proof and move forward to the next step in the publishing process.

To print this proof we recommend that you scale the PDF to fit the size of your printer paper.

RoadLovers.com presents

Havana Now

November 2012



Photos by JK McCrea

An "Eyes on..." Series Book



Copyright © 2013 by JK McCrea
 ISBN-13: 978-1482509243
 ISBN-10: 1482509245



What is Havana like?

Many of us have seen the photos showing how Havana looked in the 1950s.

Many of us saw the National Geographic Magazine's article on Cuba in November 2012.

What is Havana like now?



Current U.S. policy toward the island nation allows family visits for Cuban-Americans, but restricts the travel of other U.S. citizens. The only way I might get on the island is to pay \$3000 for a week on a group tour.

My husband was made godfather of his Havana friend's child. That's how I got an opportunity to spend a week in Havana.

I wanted to capture photos that showed more than the typical travel poster. Four billion people will never visit this city. This book is for you.

This is Havana in November 2012.

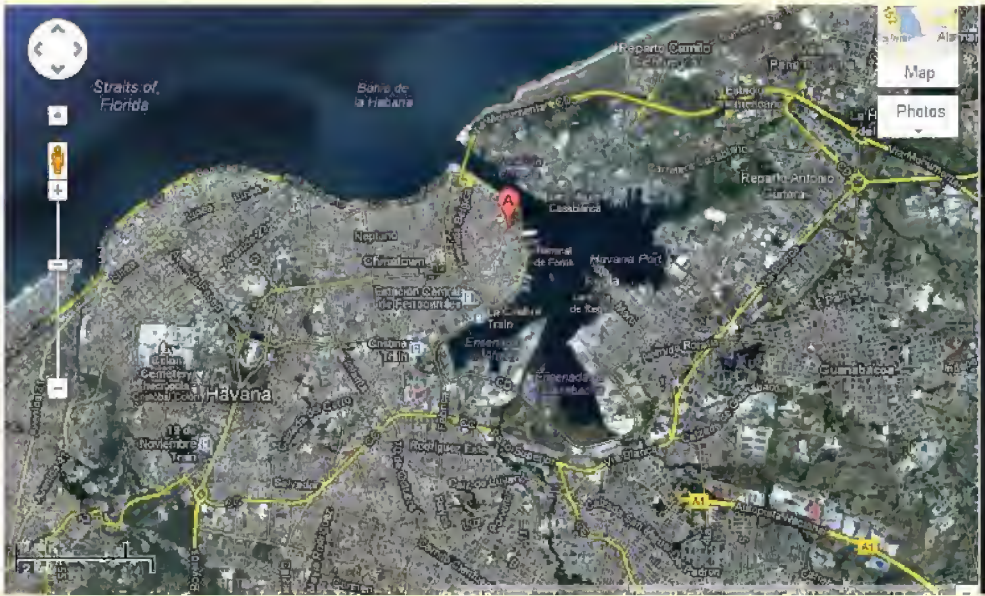
JK McCrea



"Habana me!" The private restaurant invited us to have the full "Havana experience" ... We got it.



These photos will preserve in our minds how Havana looked in November 2012.

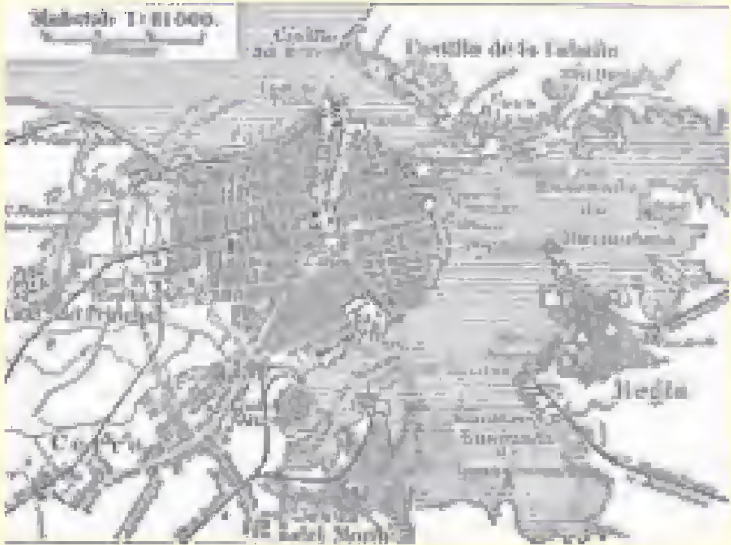


The red "A" shows Hotel Ambos Mundos on Obispo Street in Havana Vieja. *Creative Commons*

Old Havana



Several guidebooks list this location: “Carriages for hire by tourists.”



A map of Old Havana (Wikipedia, Creative Commons).



The snack bar offers *guarapo*, sugar cane juice.



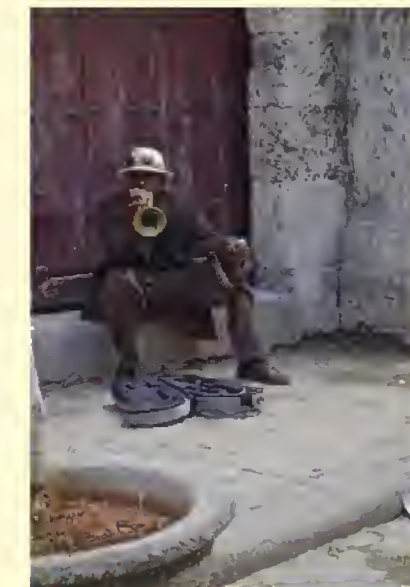
A vehicle museum on Obispo Street.



Located on Obispo street, tropical style Hotel Florida has a quiet two-story atrium with palms and large wicker chairs. It's about a block west of Ambos Mundos hotel.



This is the symbol for an approved "room for rent" in a private home. Rates are generally one-third or less than hotels.





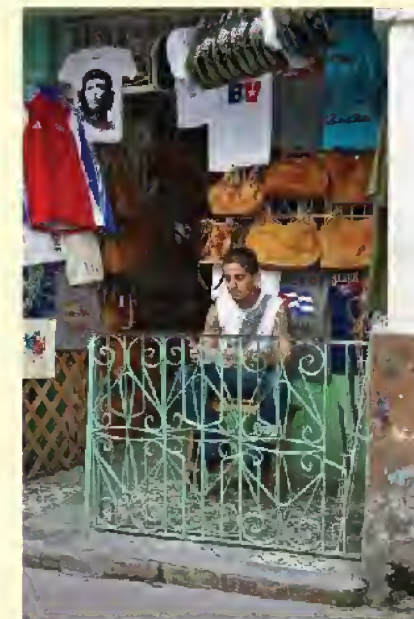
She shouted, "This is my job. No photos!"



Delicate pastries in the Francesa



Look closely at the instrument held by the guy in the straw hat. That's the lower jaw of a large animal.





Their music cascaded down Obispo Street.



A market on Obispo Street



The best chocolate in Old Havana.



The Committees to Defend the Revolution (CDR) system was formed by Fidel Castro on September 28, 1960.



This is a mass-market cafeteria with fast-food service. Not the best ice cream.... Not for gringos.



Gastronomic commercial complex

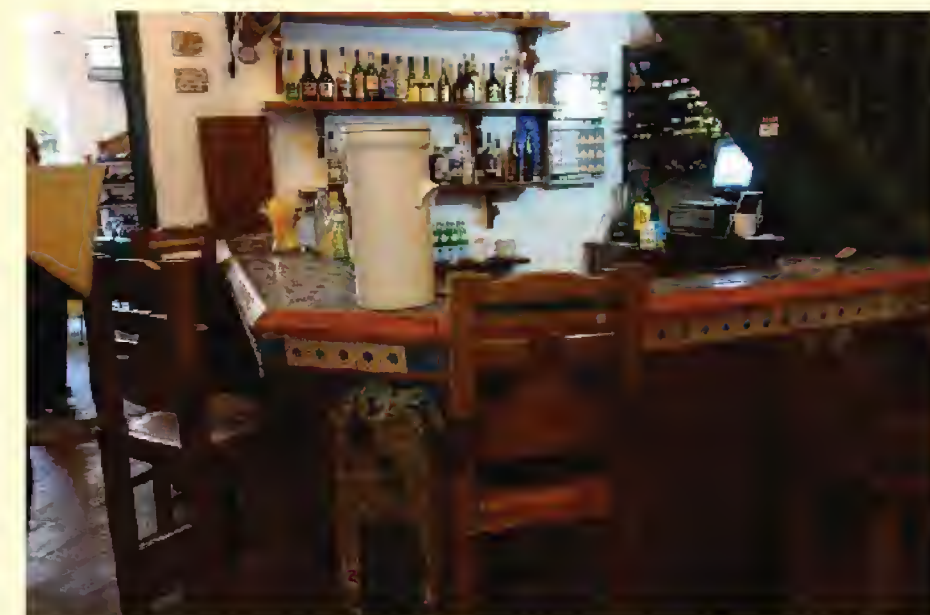


The five who are in prison in the USA

The vigorous and victorious revolution Go ahead! (street banner)



Books for sale in the plaza.





The voice of the Cuban Patrimony.



Lots of areas under construction (work, obra)



A volunteer, viewed from Obispo Street.



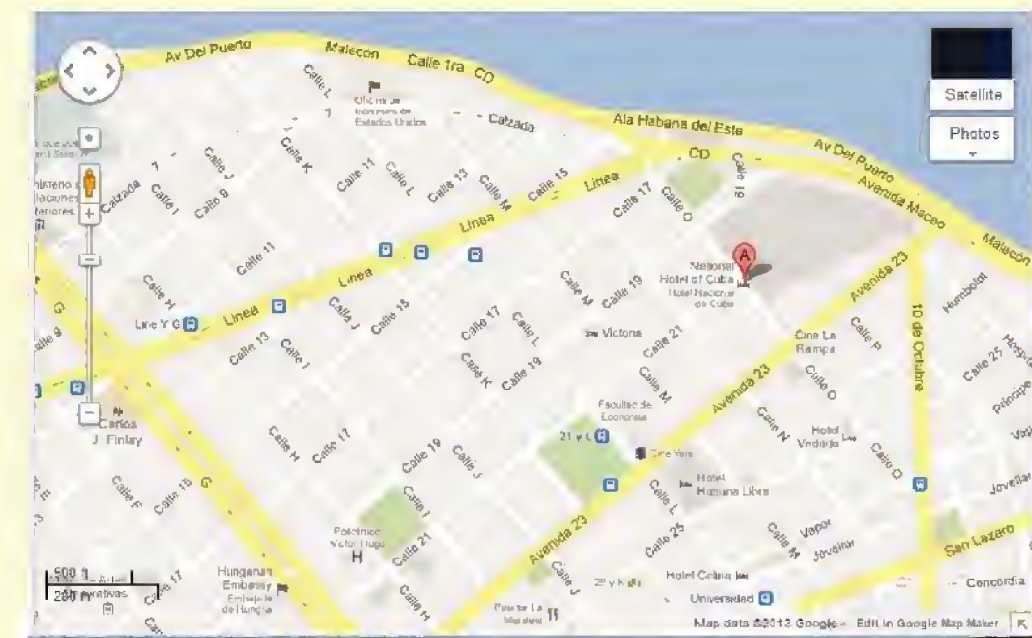
Looking west down Obispo Street, 4 p.m., headed for the Capítulo.

The Plan of the City

Here's a description by russian_yaz on virtualtourist.com

QUESTION: About traffic. Is traffic in Havana and other big cities very heavy all day or maybe in the morning only?

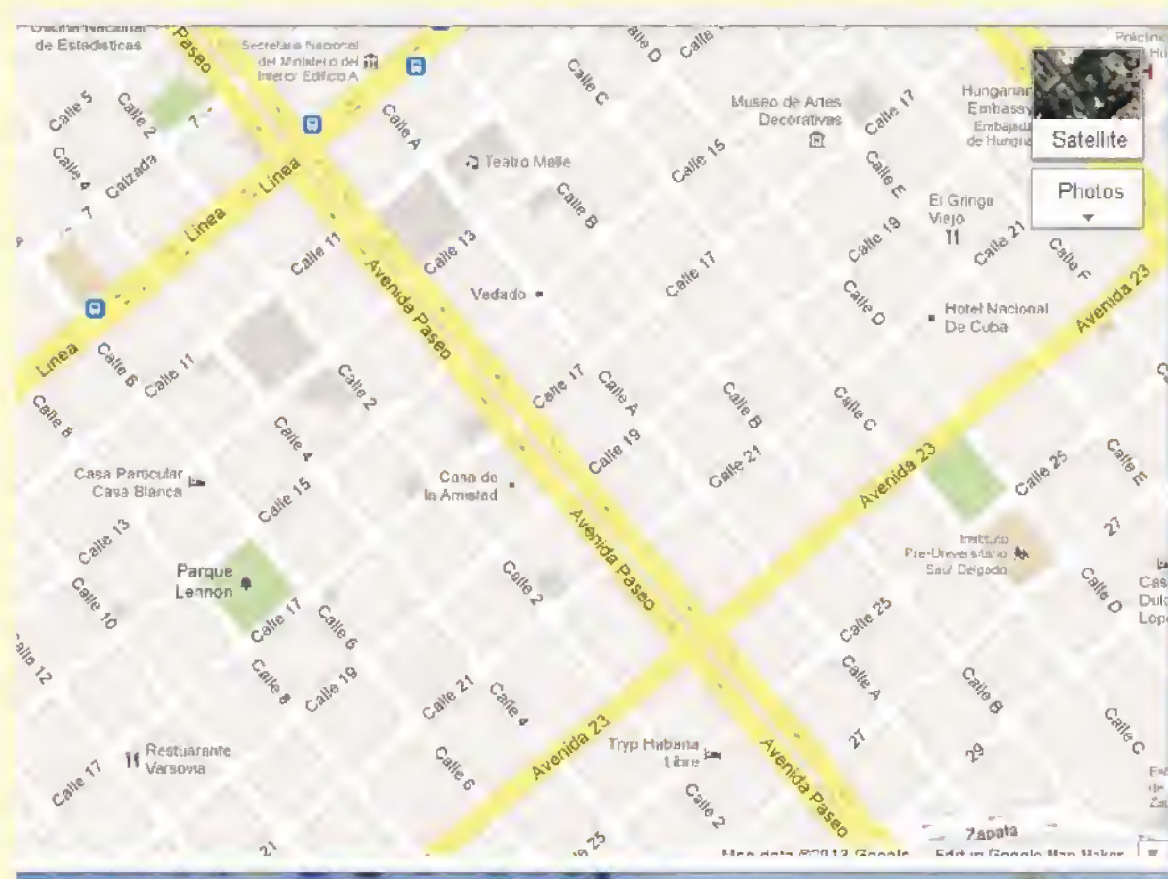
The traffic is not so heavy. At least if U compare it with other countries. The street with heavier traffic in Vedado, Havana for example, is 23rd. But don't worry, U can drive without problems, many tourist do it. I used to go usually in bicycle everywhere in Havana without problems. The worst time is off course at morning and in the afternoon between 3 and 6pm. In the pic U'll see the streets U asked for:



Also the naming of the streets in various neighborhoods of Havana like Vedado, Miramar and Playa is easy. Starting from 23, the parallel streets going in the sea directions decrease the number and are only odd numbers. In the other direction they increase. The perpendicular streets are named by the letters of the alphabet so starting from G going to the sea the next letter is H and the next one is I where the casa U choose is located. In the other direction the previous street of G is F. The letters start from Paseo street,

where I used to live. Away from Paseo the naming of the streets change to even numbers....is really easy ;)

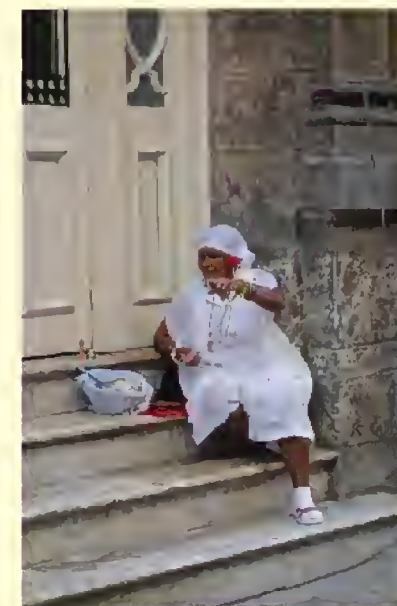
For example, the National Hotel is located near O Street and 21 Avenue. Below, you can see Parque Lennon is between 6 and 8 (NE to SW) 15 and 17 (NW to SE). You can give directions of Calle 8 y 15 and people will know that there is an intersection of an odd and an even number.



People



One of them is the Gentleman of Paris.





Quincineras at Hotel Nacional de Cuba. Sweet sixteen appears to take place a year earlier in Hispanic culture. We imagine that dresses are rented and the photos are taken as part of the day's celebration.



We hired Ivan to take us to see the apartment where the author of the song "Guantanamera" lived. These girls wanted to sit in the Coco!



Near the Victor Hugo park.

Hotels



Meliá Havana (located in Miramar). U.S. style business hotel, good for conventions and conferences. Large open spaces, destination restaurants and a view of the ocean. There's a place to walk into the water just west of the property (we saw a visitor walk in with water shoes).



Hotel Nacional de Cuba



The main entrance. The historic plaque is just behind the grey car. The entrance faces southwest.



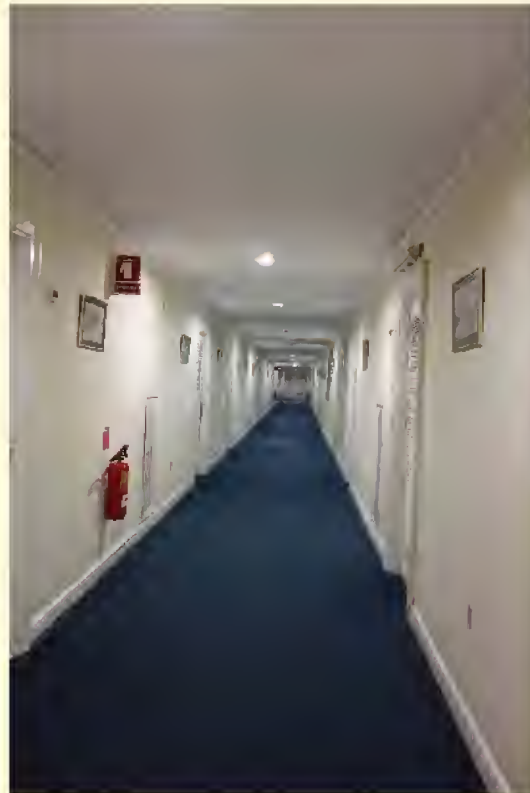
The main lobby with four grandfather clocks on the right side. The exit to the street is on the left with the emblem over the door. Exit to the right goes to the patio.



A calmer moment, shooting the western half of the lobby. The former casino is down the corridor and to the right. The Parisien cabaret hall is straight ahead. The 24-hour café and the dining room are down the stairs to the left.

Near the elevators (east end of the lobby).





The hallways are stark. Photos and articles are reproduced from the hotel's construction in 1930.



Imagine staying here in the 1940s... No TV in the room. The entertainment was on the patio, in the lobby and at the Parisien.



View of the Malecón from the fourth floor.



Annie Betancourt was leading a group with the Florida League of women voters.



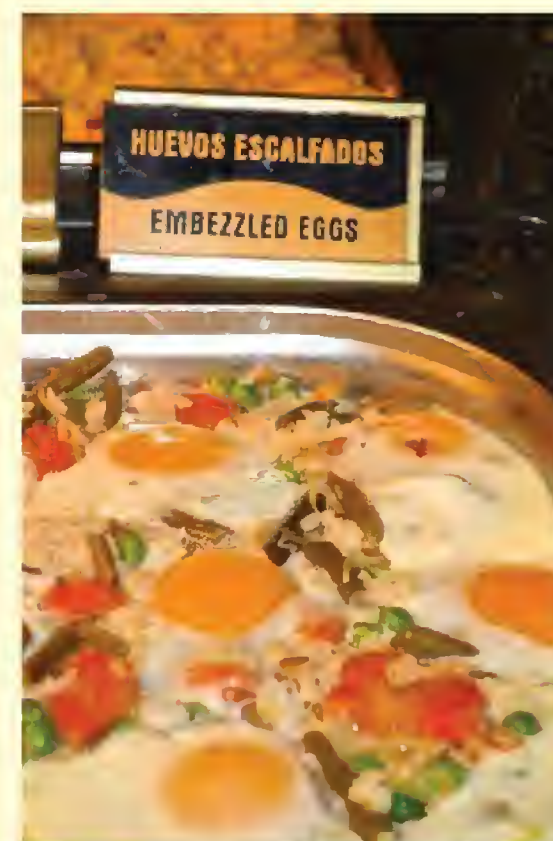
The west wing of the hotel (on the level of the lobby) offers "the best night in Havana" at Cabaret Parisien.



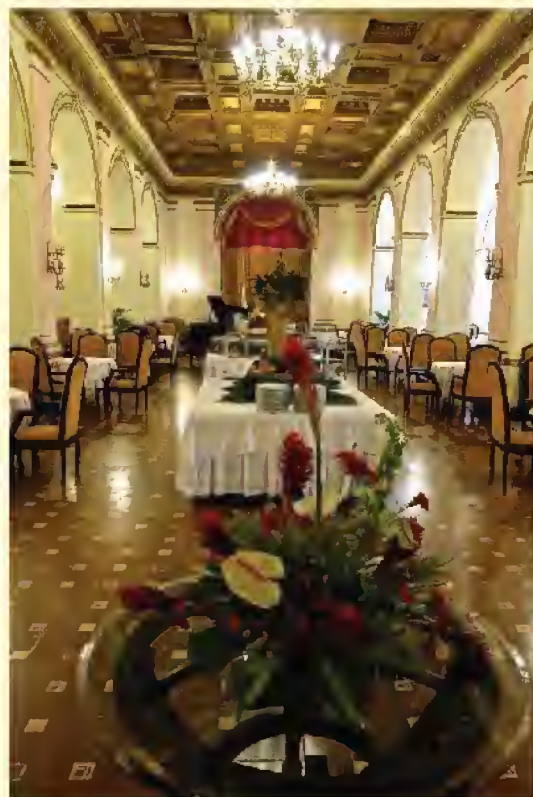
Ah, the fresh fruit.



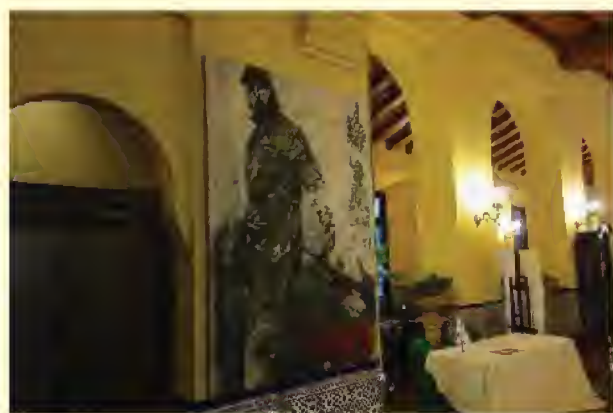
The breakfast buffet. Oh, the fresh papaya and guava juice...



Not boiled, not scrambled, not fried... what kind of eggs are these?



The fancy dining room in the east wing.



Art in the lobby.



He's no longer with us, but one of the faces of the Buena Vista Social Club is still the face of Salon 1930.



A typical sign in the hotel.

Around the hotel



Eighteen dollars a day to use the pool.



Waiting for currency exchange at the hotel...



From here, you can almost see the memorial to the victims of the U.S.S. Maine, just beyond the right edge of the photo.



The view of the Malecón is straight ahead.



Mint for mojitos.

Let's sit on the patio



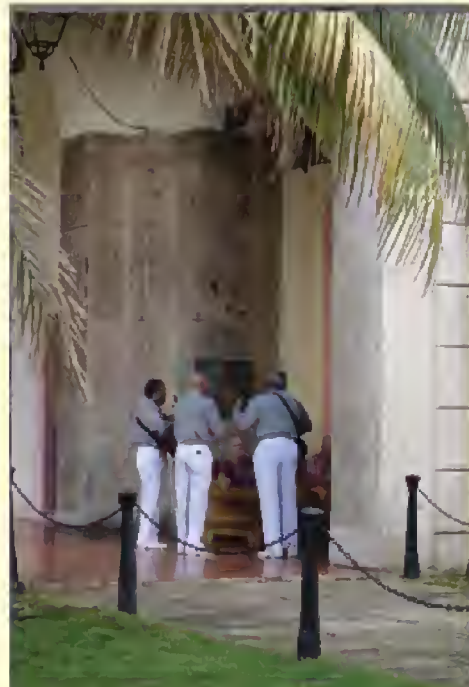
Oh, those calm breezes from the North...Must study... must learn more... must... zzzz



The original pool. The breakfast room is on the left. We met a British lady who enjoyed swimming in the morning before breakfast.



Dawn looking east along the Malecón.



Live music plays throughout the day and evening.

The hotel at night



View from the corner of O and 21 (the main entrance)



The café in the basement. Tasty eggs for dinner.



The west wing of the patio, with the former casino on the right.



The east wing, with a music group. The men's restroom is right behind the band. The east and west wings have signs indicating "Smoking" section, and there's no sign in the central part of the patio.



View at night with our back to the Malecón.



A statue on the east side of the garden in front of the patio.



If we walked any farther, we'd spend \$30 a head to hear the music of the night.



The best mojitos in Havana are made here (we were assured).



An all-female vocal and rhythm group plays on Saturday evening next to the fountain in front of the patio of HNC.

Tour of the Hotel Nacional de Cuba (HNC)



2012 minus 50 years ... The fiftieth anniversary of the Cuban missile crisis was on display during our visit to the hotel. A small case under glass in one of the tunnels north of the hotel displayed a uniform donated by the guide Estela.



The second floor retains the original look from the 1930s.



The Frank Sinatra room,



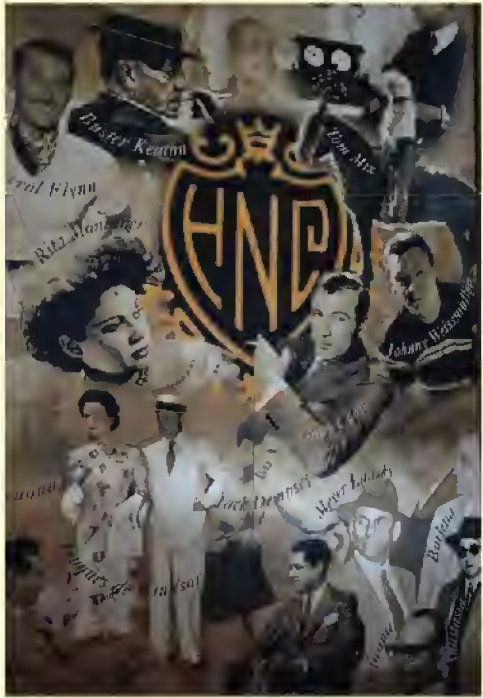
A display at the entrance of the underground trenches.



Tour of the museum (and bar)



The hotel's tour guide Estela claimed that she heard that Steven Spielberg said in an interview that he had been in "the Bahamas" when shown a photo from his visit to the Hotel Nacional.



More than photos... A rock star left a guitar here.



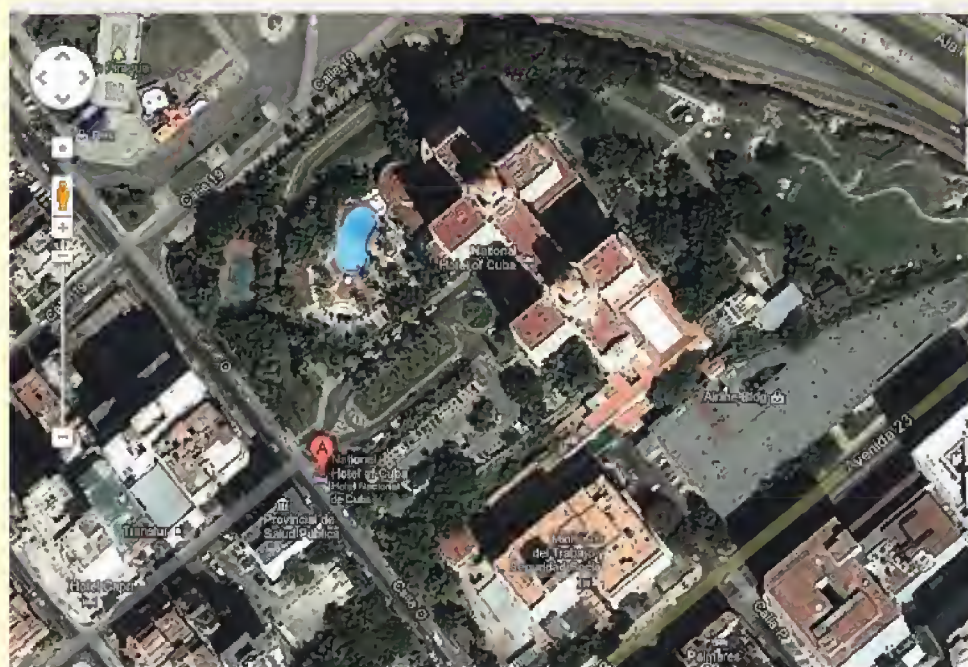
The chess master Capablanca was here.



Bola de Nieve (Snowball) played piano in the restaurant across the street from the HNC.



A detail from the history walls (1960s) features the Russian cosmonaut.



View from above.



The former casino is behind the bar.

We went for a walk across La Rampa (23 Avenue) and wandered east for several blocks after sunset.



A friendly passerby asked what we were looking for. We said, “Batidos” and she suggested a small restaurant around the corner... and down two blocks... and then right and another two blocks, then a right turn...



After giving us the tour, the friendly son gave us his email address.

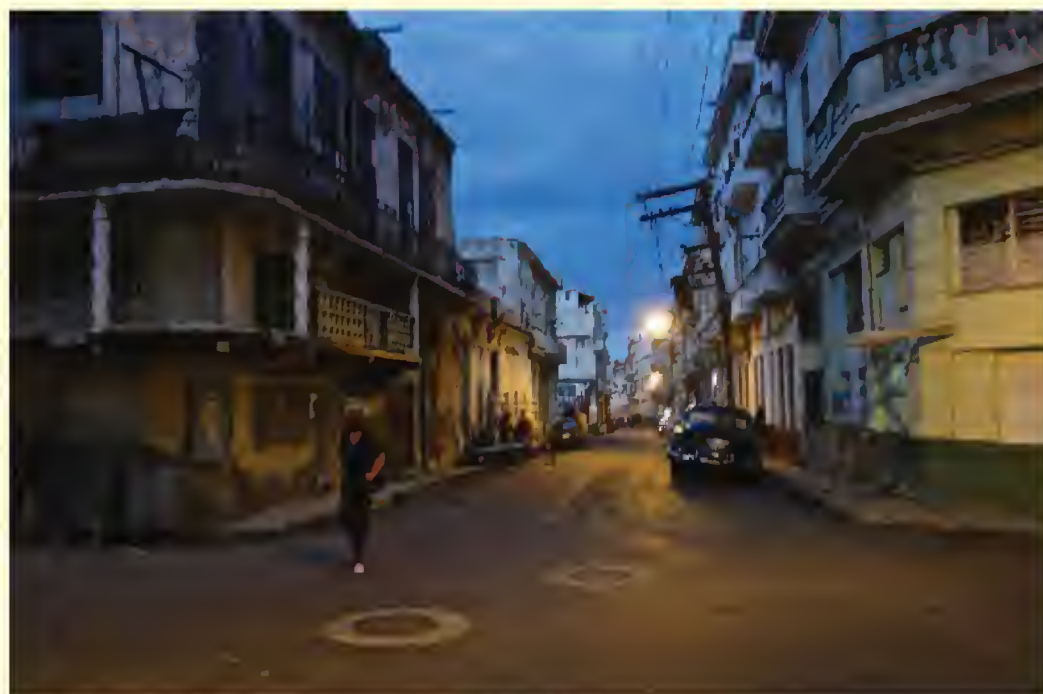


We found a pastry shop.





Maracas, a quiet restaurant.



It looked scary, but it wasn't.



Cuban rhythms coming from a terrace one floor above street level.



They're really working on that car.



The car up on cinder blocks is just to the right, down the street 100 meters.



Transportation



Cocos look like oversized helmets. Another model has a squared-off rear.







"Gold Black" (oro negro)



We heard that some gasoline is sold with lead.

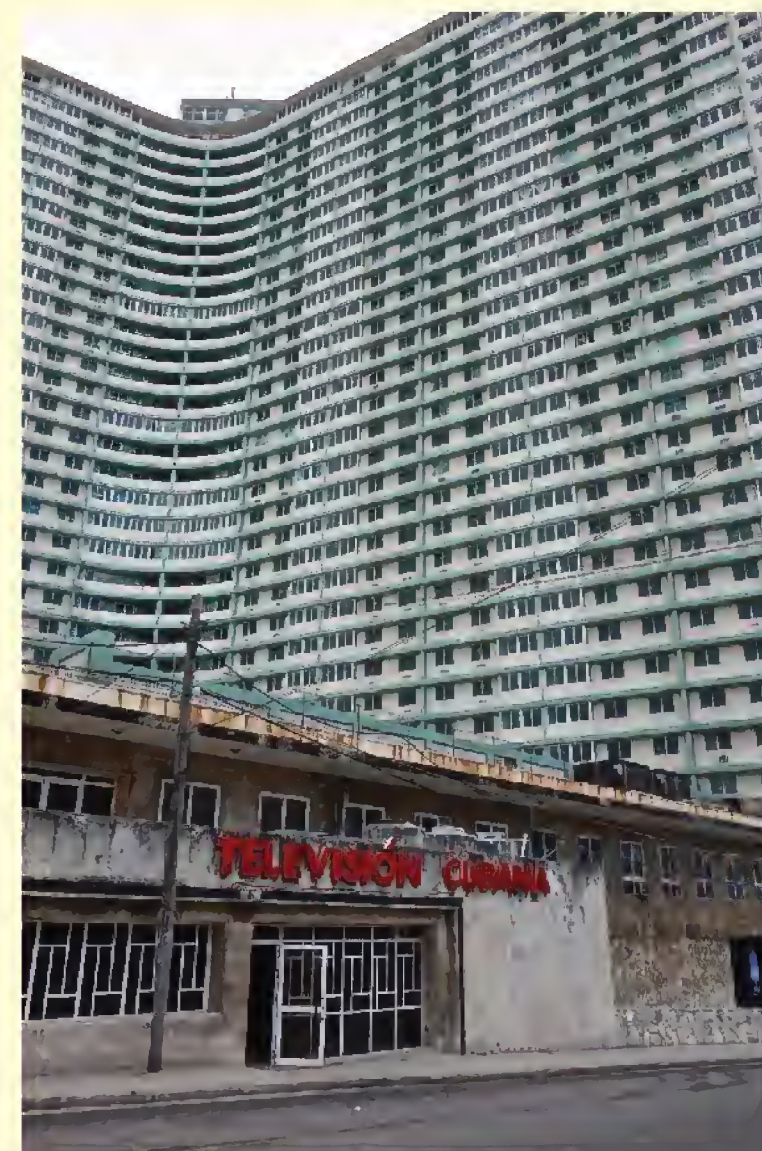
White smoke in the exhaust often means that you are burning antifreeze.
<http://wiki.answers.com/>



Ivan ("Your Amigo in Havana," according to his sign-off in our journal) gave us a slower tour around Vedado and Central Havana, finishing with a brief stop at the Miranda statue at the western side of the entrance to the main harbor.



Famous Buildings



In the background is the FOCSA opened in 1957. The penthouse is open at noon. We passed it twice on foot in the morning so we didn't get around to seeing the view.



China gate.



The steps of the Capitulo.



There's a large statue inside the main hall of the Capitulo.



The John Lennon statue is in Vedado, at the intersection of Calle 6 and Calle 15



Turn around and you'll see the view (top photo) of the Granma boat. There are two museos de Bellas Artes. This is the contemporaneous art, featuring artists from the 20th Century (photos forbidden).



Che's outline appears near the Jose Martí monument



A stadium east of the city, on the road to Santa Maria beach.



The Victor Hugo monument, about ten blocks southwest of the HNC.

Street scenes



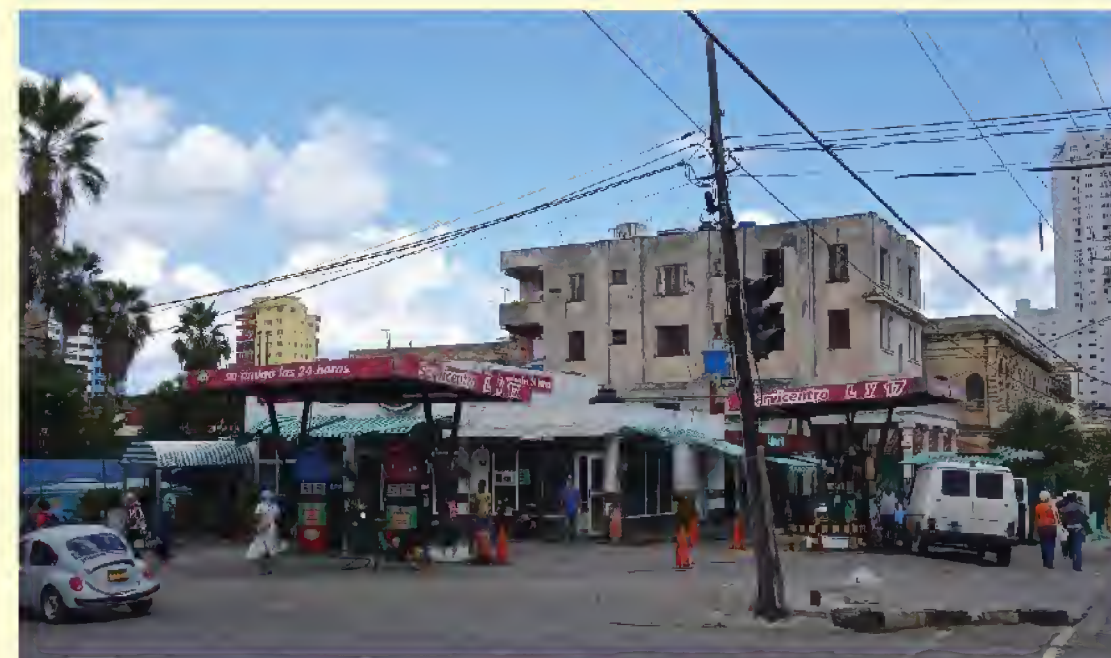
The other side of the China Gate.



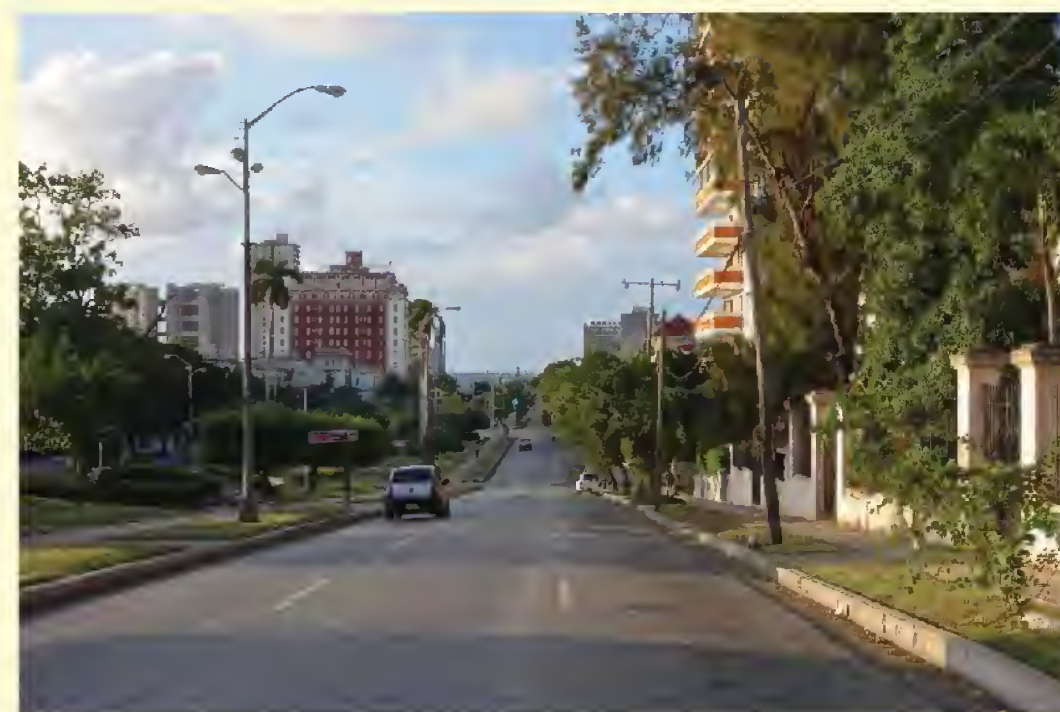
Where are the cars? It appears to be Puerto Rico without the heavy traffic.







At the intersection of Calle L and Calle 17







Another walking street



An artist painted the facades of several blocks, creating a tourist attraction.





Architecture





Near the Hotel Nacional. Around the corner is a food store where we stocked up on botellas de agua.





The balconies look like coffins for a reason. The teenager son of the building's owner drowned while swimming in the ocean.

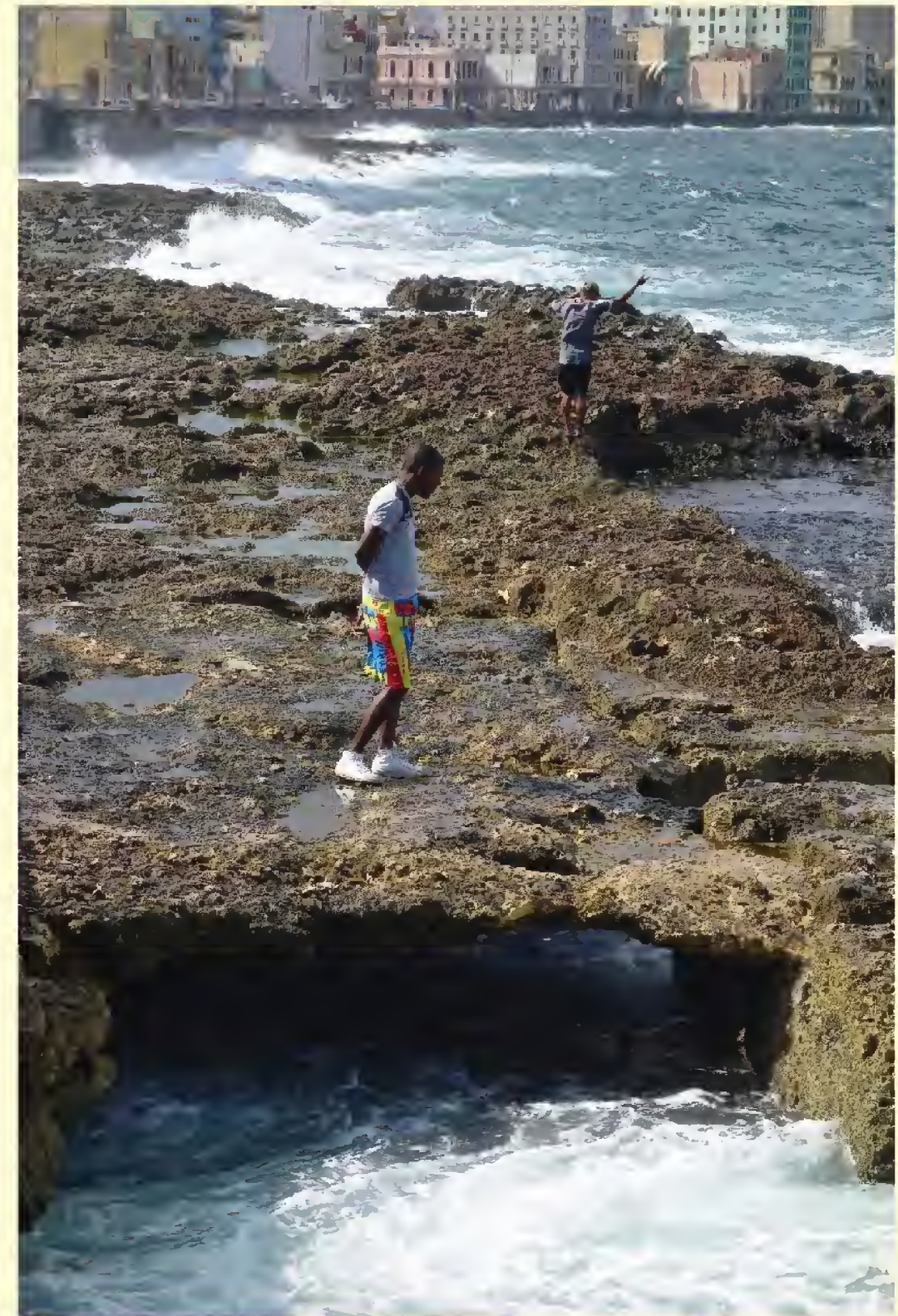




Malecón



The Malecón, looking north. For several days the high winds created waves that splashed over the wall, soaking the sidewalk.





The grand sea wall protects the north boundary of La Habana. The west end of the wall starts at this two-story fort, popular for drinks at dusk.



This is the start of the Malecón on the west end.



View of the Malecón from the Hotel Nacional. It was hard to find a place to walk down to the water. “Es peligroso,” many locals told us.



Shopping

Stores



A hardware store near the FOCSA building.



Street Vendors





Selling maní (peanuts rolled in a tall narrow cone).



Open Markets



There's an open market about eight blocks southeast from the Hotel Nacional on 19 Avenue.





He offered me the coconut water.





A bakery near the open market.



The Crafts Market Warehouse



Near the south end of Old Havana is a former warehouse where vendors display handcrafts from around the island.



It's a great place to get a coco frio (with or without rum).





After The Bacardí family's factories were nationalized and the government started a new label: Havana Club. The logo appears on t-shirts, too.

Restaurants

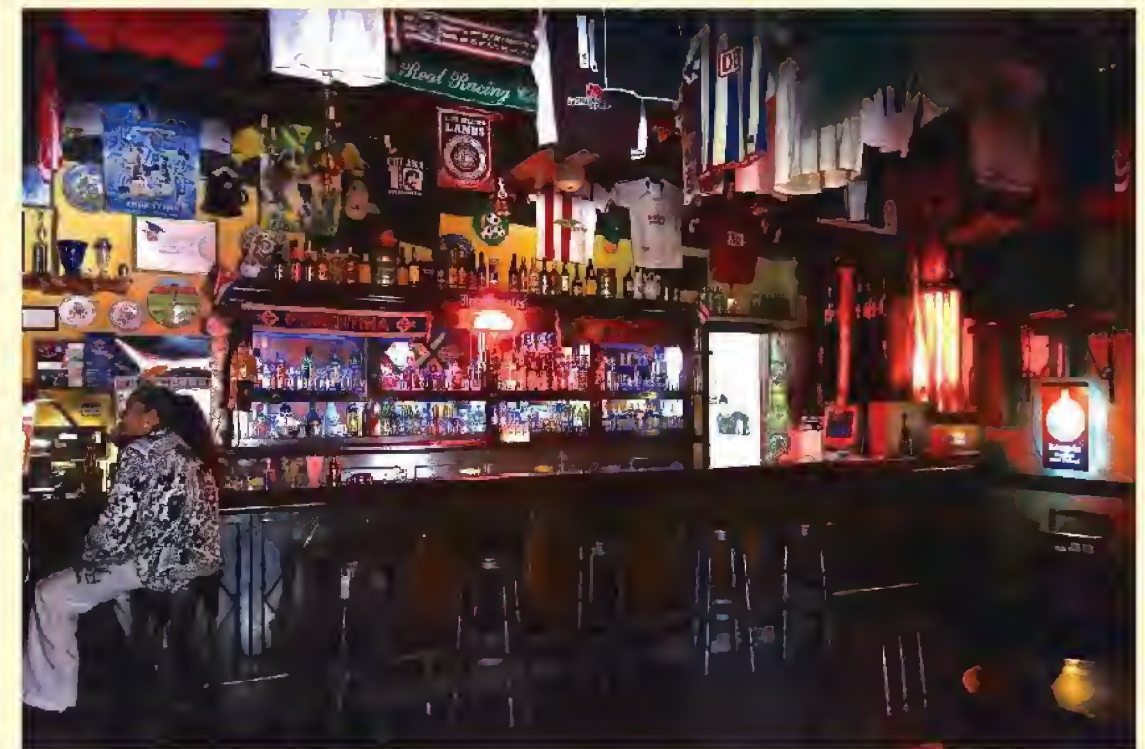


La Roca.





The menu at La Roca.



The little rabbit English pub



Near the HNC. Bola de Nieve played piano here.



A private restaurant in the apartment building at O and 21.



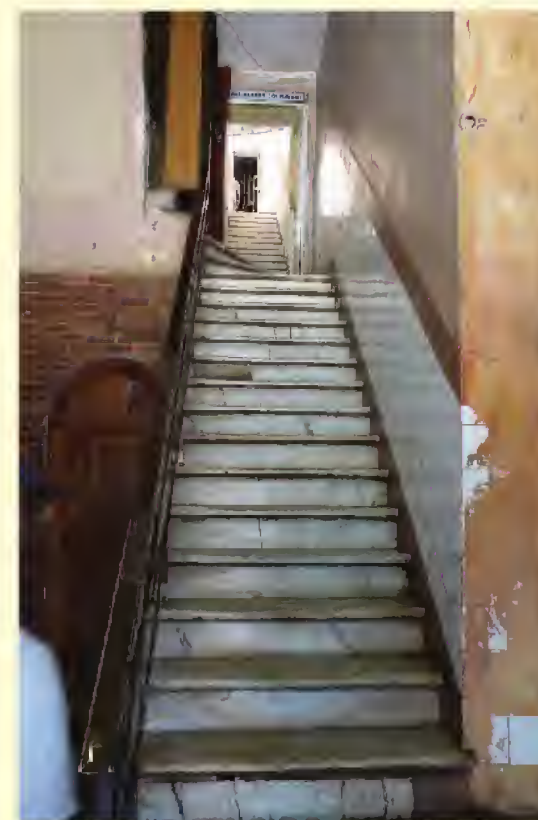
Breakfast for dinner in the basement café (HNC).



A pizza at Nardo's (across from the Capitol building in Old Havana).



The second floor of Nardo's.



Entrance to Nardo's.



Palenque, a complex of six restaurants in Miramar.

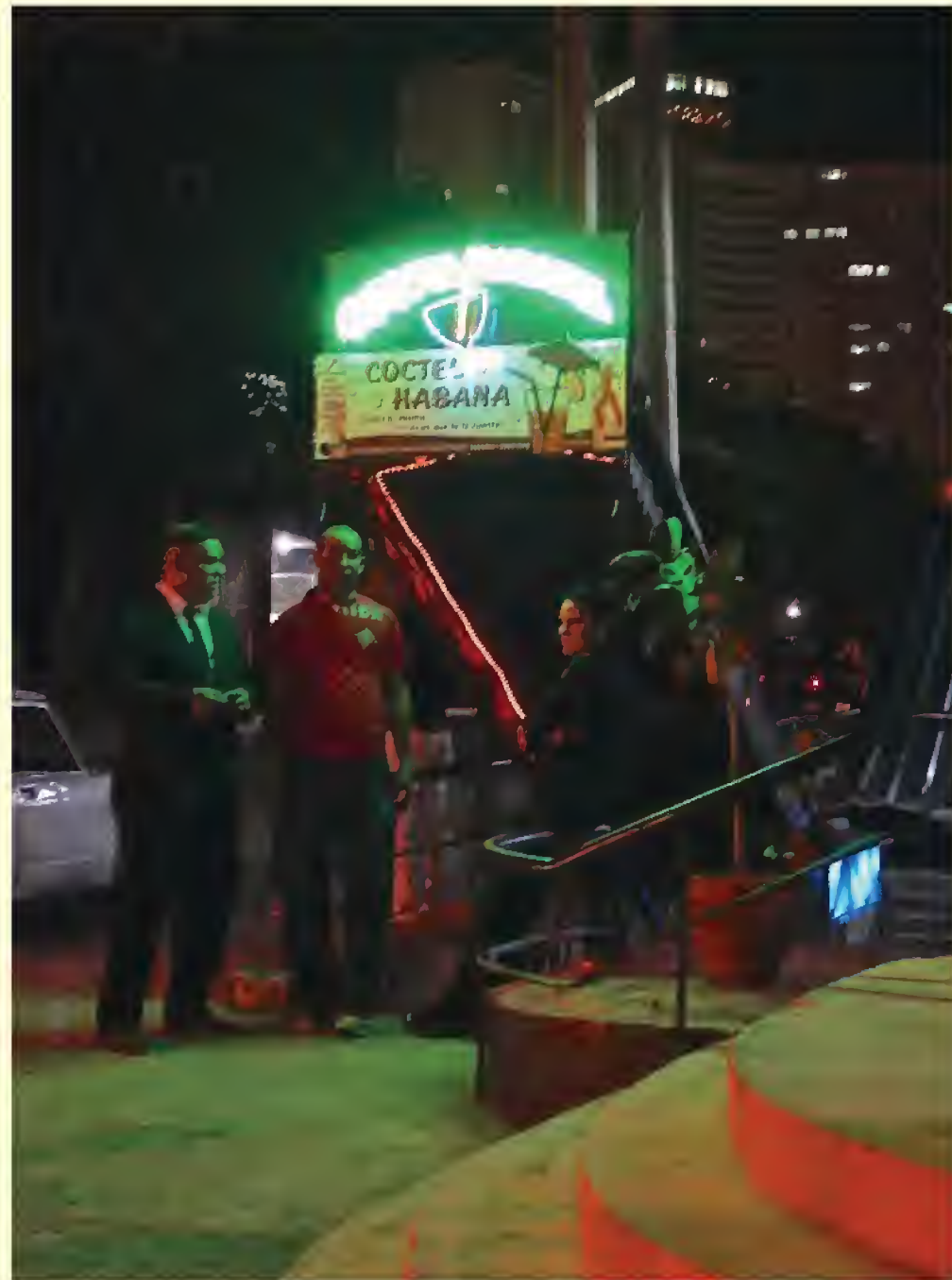


Ah, yucca.



We recommend the meat here.





A nightclub on La Rampa (23 Avenue) two blocks from the HNC.

Areas Outside Central Havana

Miramar and Inside Homes



A three-level home in Miramar.





A guy with a beard lives here.



Bottles of boiled water are cooled and ready to go.



Patio of a retired teacher, ready for a client.



A seawall and seaside pool in Miramar.



The retired teacher's sitting room.

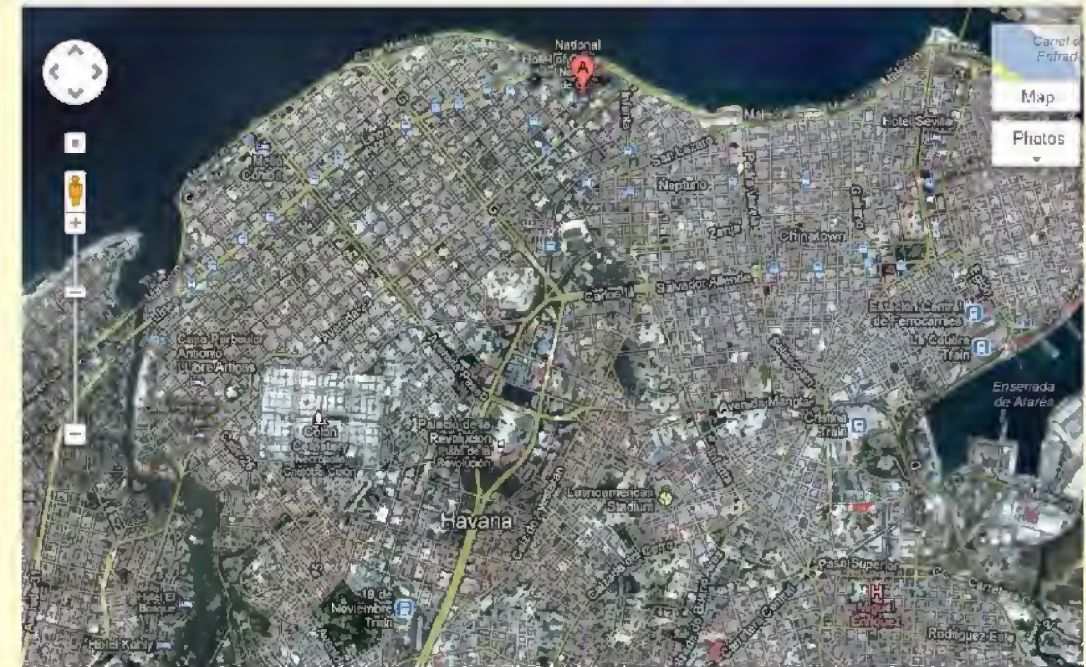
Let's visit the home of the ahijada.





Local produce.

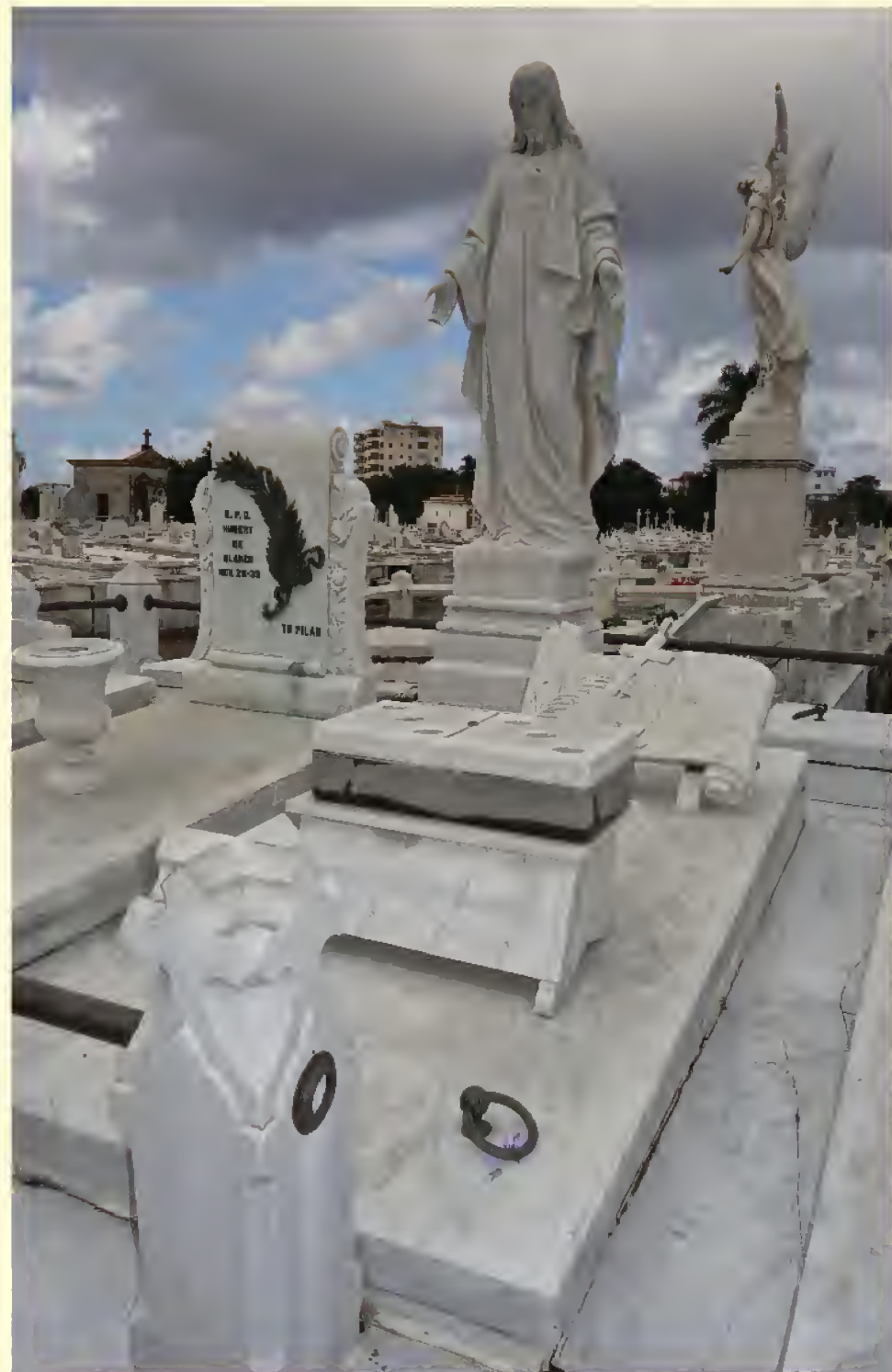
Necropolis



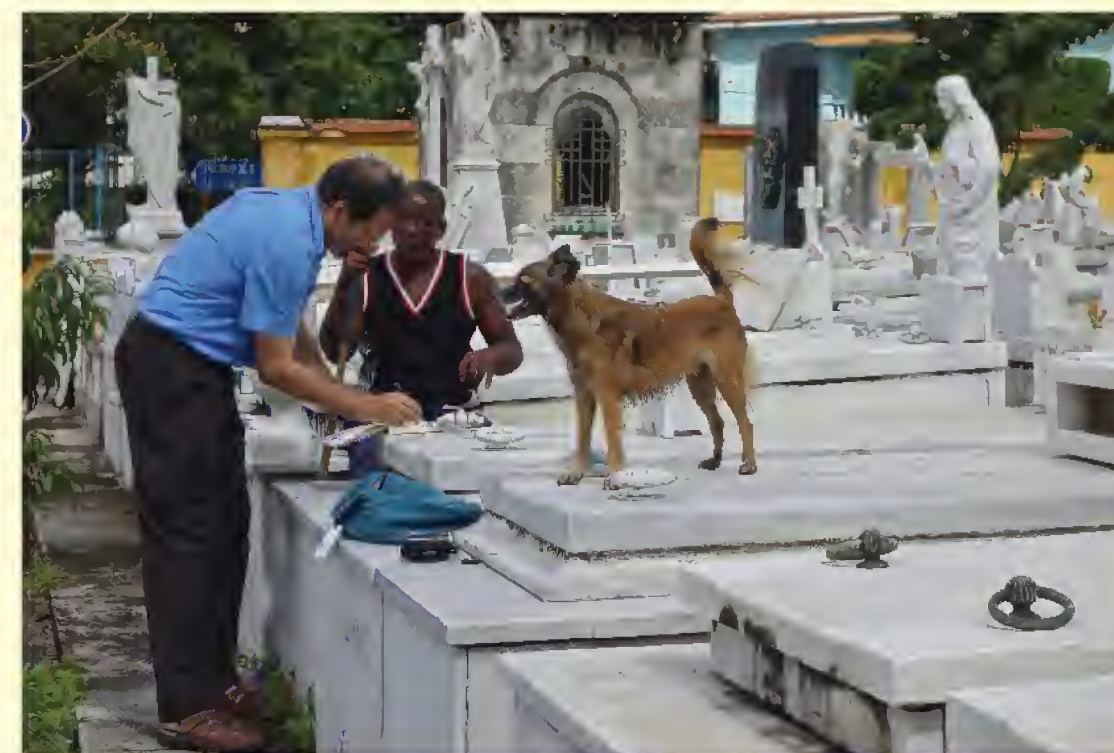
What is that white block in the lower left?



The goal: The resting place of the Grandmaster Capablanca.



The double three (3/3) was this person's last tile.

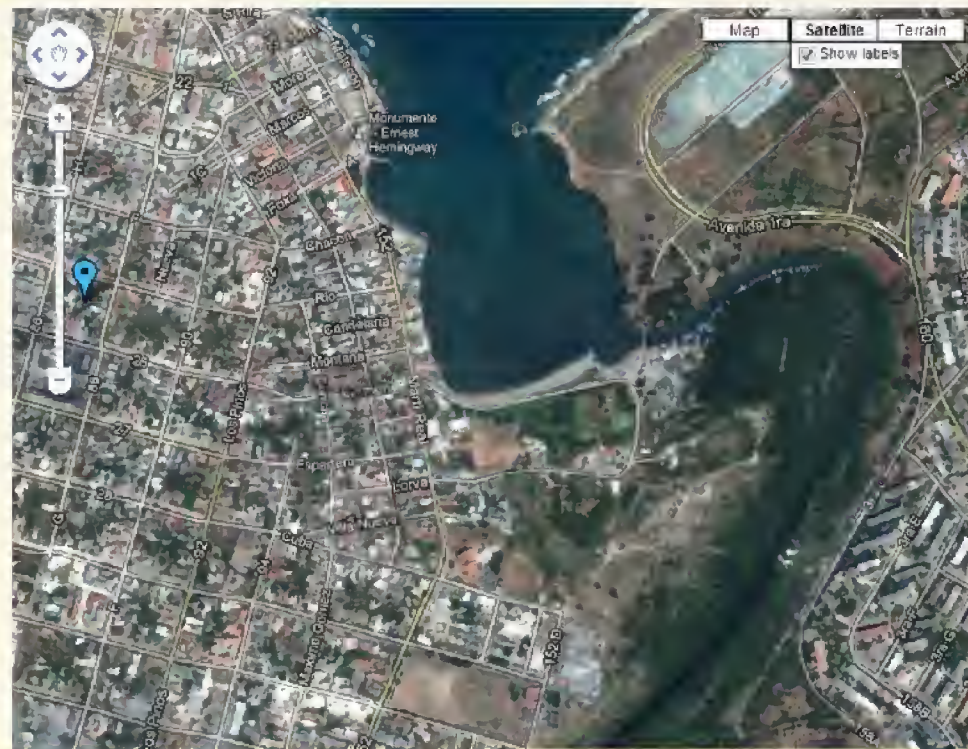


We're leaving a note on the tomb of Grandmaster Capablanca.

The Fort



Cojimar, the Hemingway Harbor

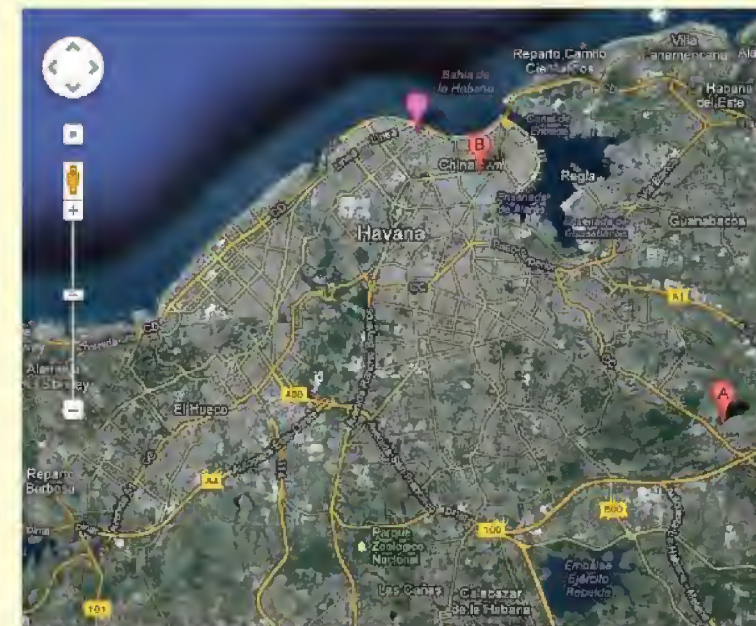


The road from the coastal highway comes from the south

Hemingway's Finca Vigia



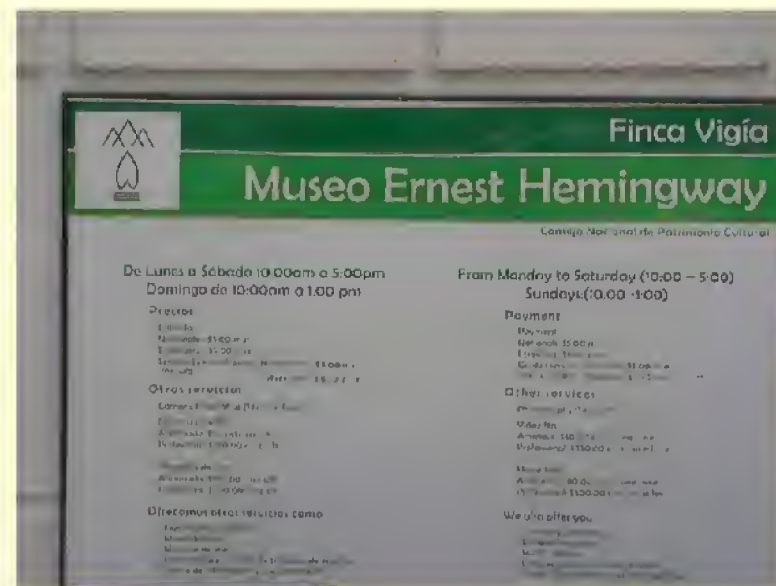
On the road heading southeast out of Havana.



The "A" marks Finca Vigia, about 12 km from Central Havana.

The "B" marks Simon Bolivar Avenue.

The Pink spot is the Hotel Nacional.



At the gatehouse of the museum.



Extracting the juice from sugar cane.





Guarapo—recommended *sin hielo*.



The guest house (on the right) with the main house farther on.





The view looking north (from the Cat Tower).



Who walked up these stairs?



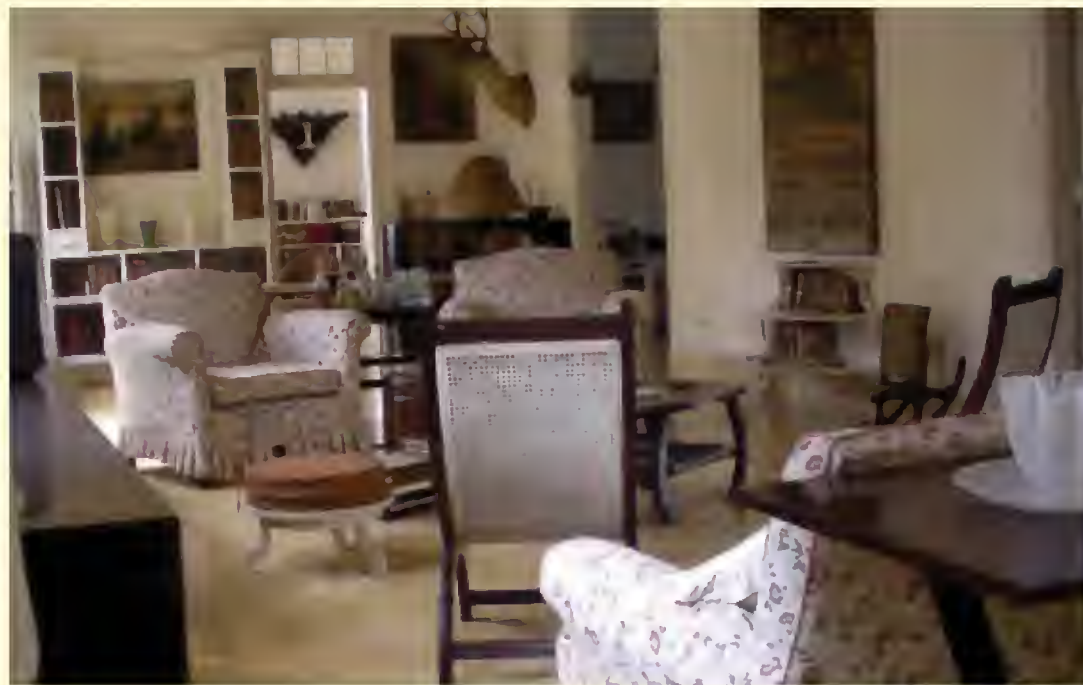
Front entrance.



Greeting us on the right side of the entrance.

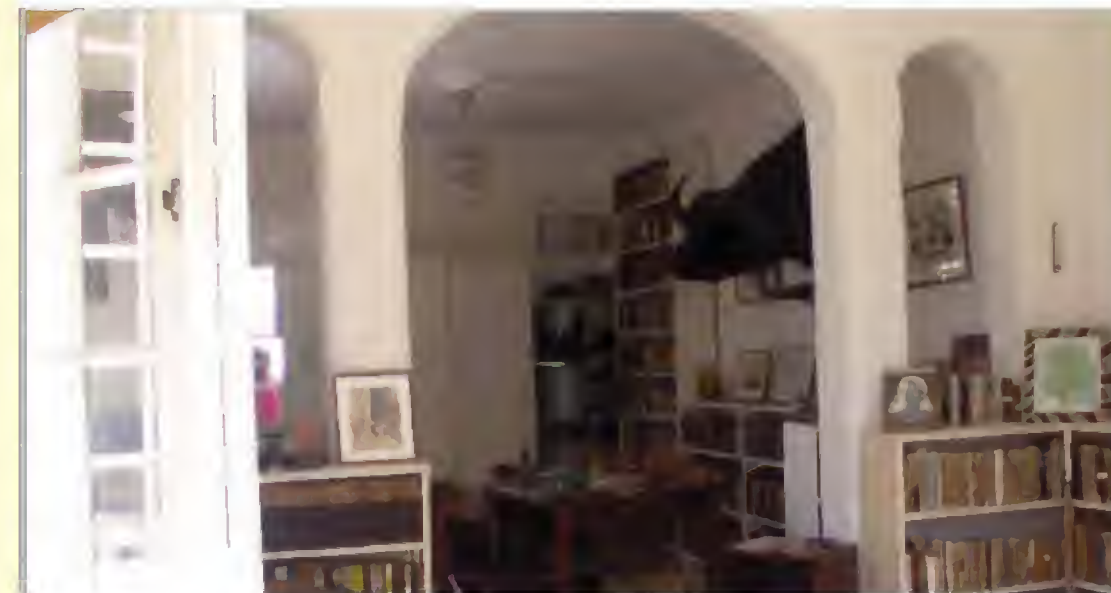


A view from the front entrance toward the dining room.

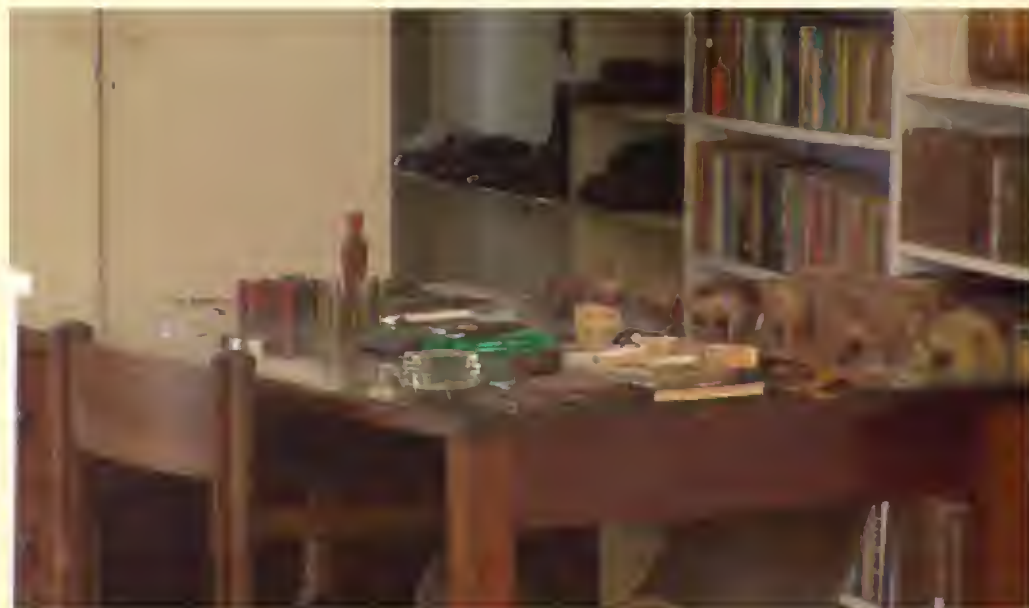


The Living Room

The Writing Room



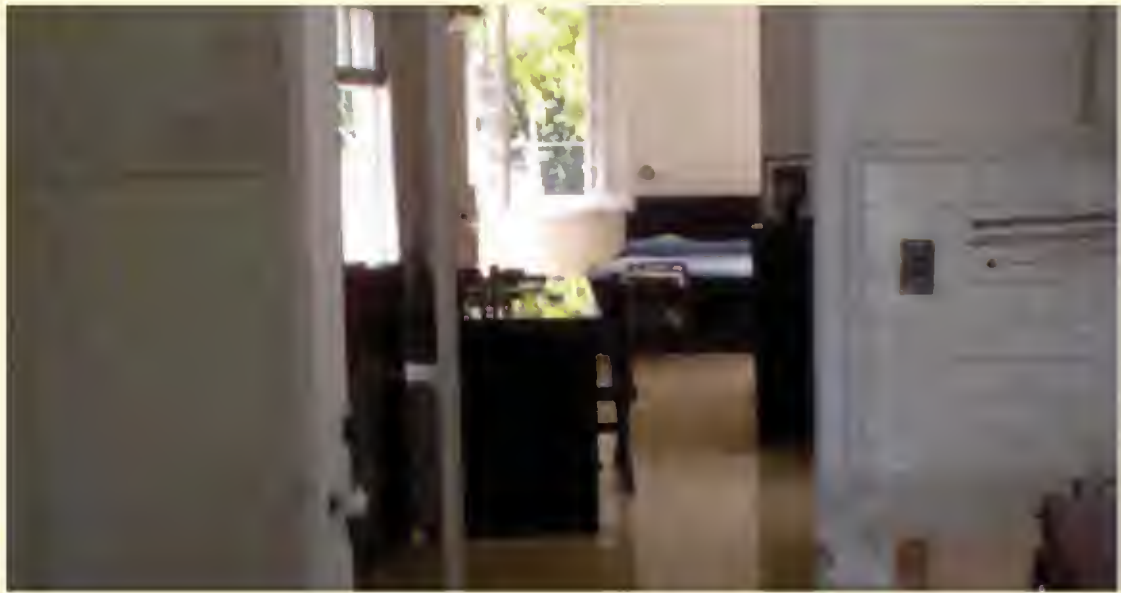
He stood to type.



Some of his texts in translation.



The Bath Room



A view through to the Writing Room.



The courageous lizard. Hemingway thought the lizard had fought bravely when attacked by his cat. To commemorate the lizard's last stand, he put it on display.



The dining room on the left, the main sitting room in the middle.



The study, located between the dining room and the bedroom.



Detail of a screenprint in the study.





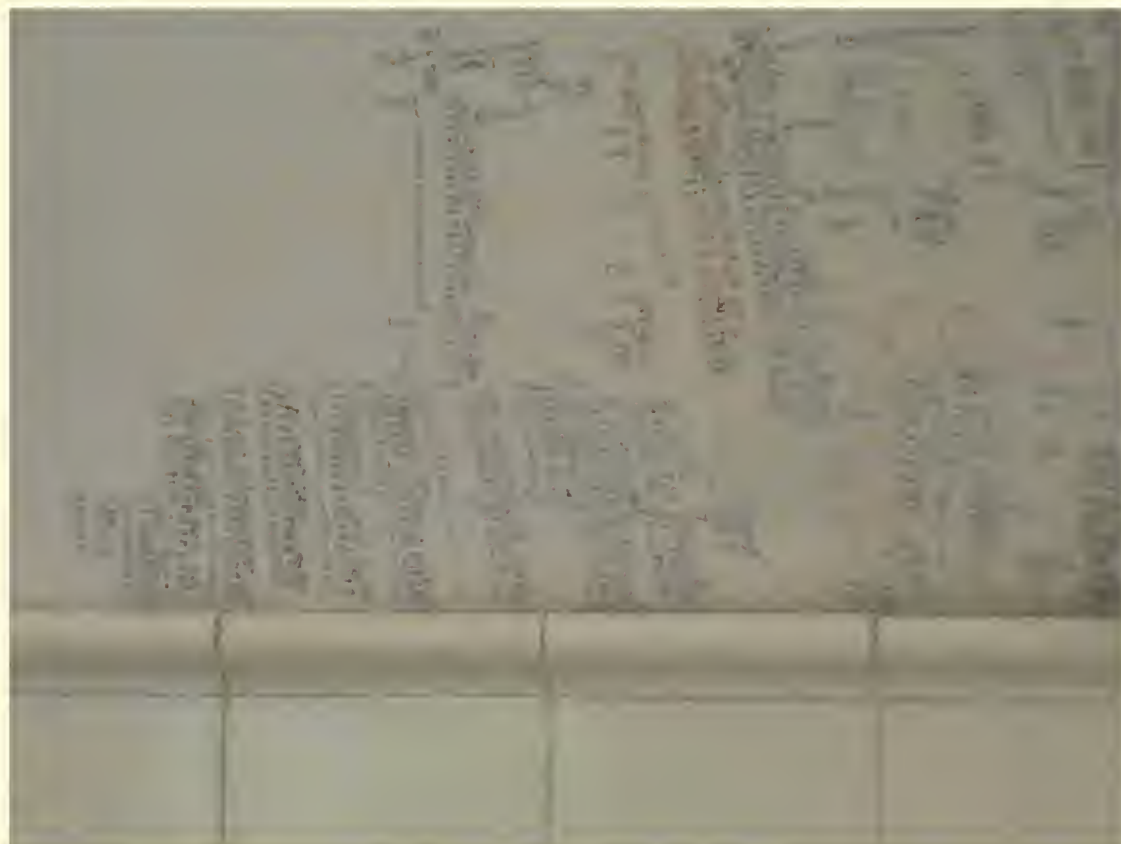
Lots of journals in the bedroom. We hope those books have been scanned.



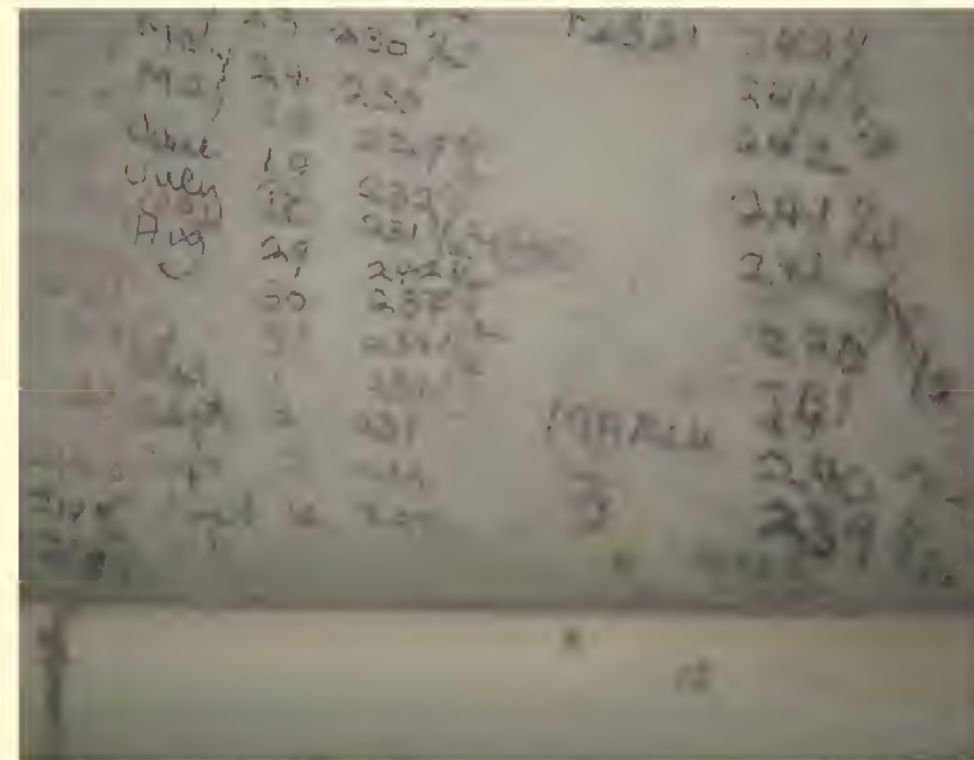
Dressing table in the bedroom.



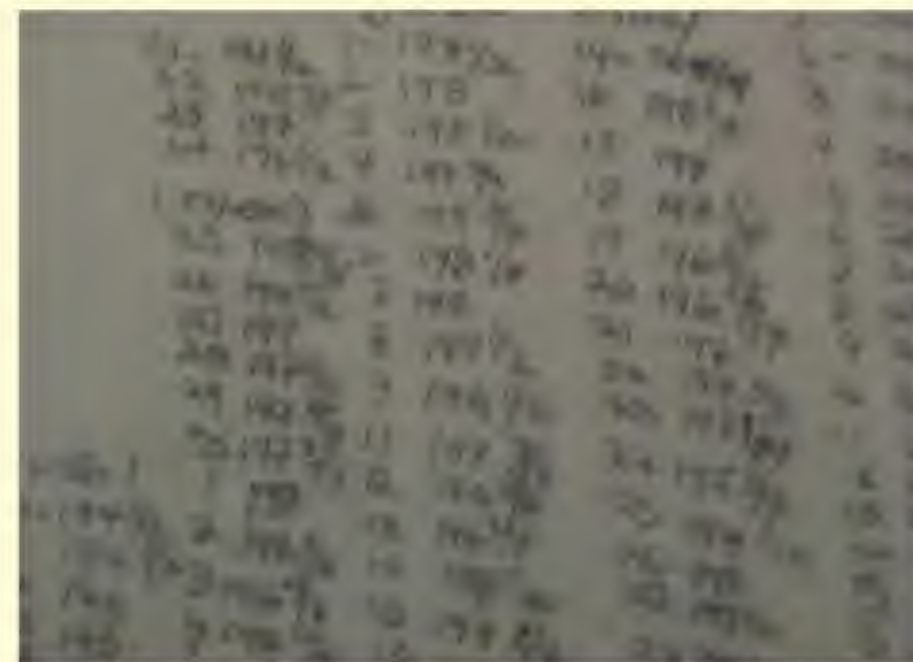
The jacket reads "War Correspondent."



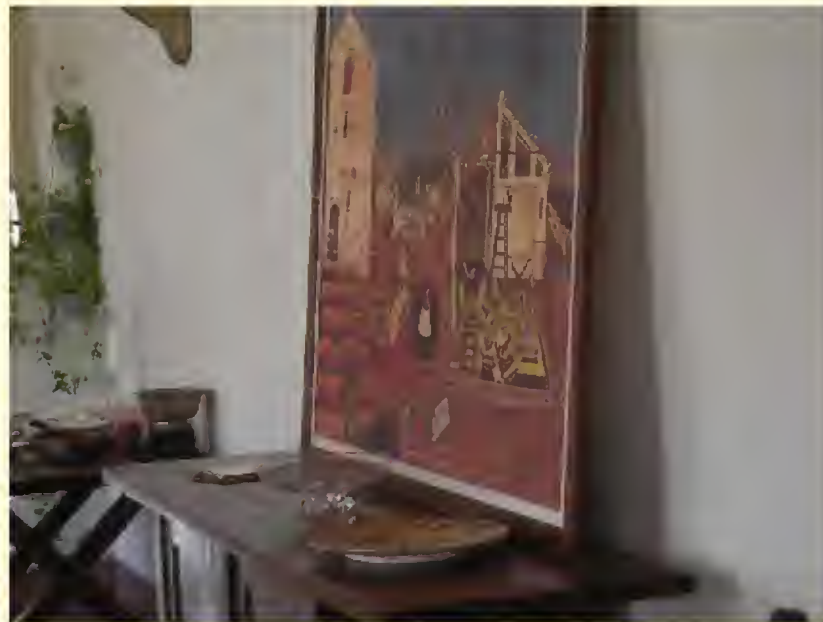
More than ten years of watching his weight, ending in 1959.



Getting heavier



His fighting weight (around 198 pounds).



A painting in the dining room.



The dining room. The door at the far end of the hall is the main entrance, which faces south.

The Pilar (Hemingway's fishing boat)





End Note

Thank you for taking time to visit the island through my photos.

The cost

It costs \$350 each to fly 227 miles from Miami to Havana (more than a trip to New York, which is four times farther), we stayed in a private apartment (\$40 a night with breakfast), our friend rented a car for \$50 a day and spent about \$20 for fuel, and we each paid \$25 at the airport as a departure tax. We spent \$40 a day on food, so the entire trip was just under \$1200.

Room	280
Food	280
Car	370
Airplane	700
Overweight	141**
Airport tax	50

\$1821 for the two of us.	

Quotes by tour groups: \$2400 to \$3200 per person

**We brought more than 60 pounds of medicines, baby food and pens.

The Future

I hope change comes to Cuba at a pace that the islanders can cope with. I hope they don't get ripped off by the con artists. Cuba is where I was when I was in my 20s. I was open, naïve and inexperienced. I didn't question things. I didn't have enough experience to question things.

It's like going to a doctor and he says, "I'm going to take something out of you." I would say, "Okay," and I wouldn't know to get a second opinion. You're a doctor, you must know. Well, when Cuba opens up, some people are going to come and tell them that they need surgery when they don't.

Someone will tell them to raze many of the old buildings. I hope that doesn't happen.



Wikipedia, Creative Commons.

I look forward to sharing more photos with you at JKMcCrea.net

Blog: RoadloversInternational.com.

JK McCrea

Proof

Printed By Createspace

